

DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS
ADMINISTRATOR'S MEMO SERIES

ACTION 03-01

ISSUE DATE: 01/16/2003
DISPOSAL DATE: On-going

RE: INAPPROPRIATE
SANCTIONING

To: W-2 Agency Directors

From: Mary C. Rowin /s/
Deputy Division Administrator

Purpose:

The purpose of this memo is to remind Wisconsin Works (W-2) agencies that they must timely review W-2 cases in which potentially inappropriate sanctions have occurred and correct underpayments to those W-2 participants who are determined to have been inappropriately sanctioned.

Background:

The Legislative Audit Bureau (LAB) released a comprehensive evaluation (Report 01-07) of the W-2 program in April of 2001 (<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lab/reports/01-7full.pdf>). The report found that inappropriate sanctions were being imposed on W-2 participants in non-sanctionable placements. In December 2002 LAB issued a follow up letter regarding the inappropriate sanctioning. The letter reviewed the Department's efforts to remedy problems associated with inappropriate sanctions and found some errors continue to persist.

Following the issuance of Report 01-07, the Department reviewed cases to identify W-2 participants that were inappropriately sanctioned. Inappropriate sanctioning may occur when a participant moves from a case management placement to a payment placement and from a non-sanctionable Caretaker of an Infant (CMC) payment placement to a sanctionable payment placement (for example, a Community Service Job (CSJ) placement). The Department issued lists of participants that received reduced payments due to the appearance of inappropriate sanctions to the relevant W-2 agencies. In addition, the Department issued two Operations Memos:

- 01-21, which instructs agencies on ways to identify potential cases where inappropriate sanctions may happen;

- 01-48, which outlines the reconciliation process for cases that have inappropriate sanctions.

The Department continues to issue quarterly updates to agencies of cases with inappropriate sanctions.

Rectifying and Identifying Inappropriate Sanctions:

W-2 agencies must review Operations Memo 01-21 with staff for case management techniques to avoid inappropriate sanctions. W-2 agencies must also continue to review EOS report 760, which lists payments and the participants sanctioned in certain W-2 placements and the amount of the sanctions. Use of this report allows an agency to immediately recognize and address inappropriate sanctions.

The Department will continue to provide quarterly updates to the agencies regarding potential inappropriate sanctions that may have been missed by the agencies. W-2 agencies must continue to rectify the underpayments 15 days from the issuance of the lists. The Department will continue to monitor agencies to ensure guidelines are being followed. If agencies have questions regarding this process, they should contact their Area Administrator.

REGIONAL OFFICE CONTACT: Area Administrator